



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

STATEWIDE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Michael P. Bowler, *Statewide Bar Counsel*

287 Main Street
Second Floor – Suite Two
East Hartford, CT 06118-1885
(860) 568-5157 Fax (860) 568-4953
Judicial Branch Website: www.jud.ct.gov

Attorney Mark Dubois
Chief Disciplinary Counsel
100 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Attorney Donna L. Wright
182 Willard Street
New Haven, CT 06515

RE: Grievance Complaint #05-0121, Abery-Wetstone v. Wright

Dear Chief Disciplinary Counsel and Respondent:

Pursuant to Practice Book §2-82(b), the undersigned, duly-appointed reviewing committee of the Statewide Grievance Committee, has reviewed the *Conditional Admission and Agreement as to Discipline* (hereinafter “*Conditional Admission*”) filed March 9, 2006 and submitted for approval in the above referenced matter. After careful consideration of the *Conditional Admission*, the *Affidavit* of the Respondent submitted pursuant to Practice Book §2-82(c) and the entire record of the complaint, and after conducting a hearing pursuant to Practice Book §2-82(b) on March 9, 2006, the undersigned hereby APPROVE the *Conditional Admission*, a copy of which is attached hereto together with the *Affidavit* of the Respondent. Accordingly, the disposition agreed to by the Chief Disciplinary Counsel and the Respondent in the above referenced matter and set forth in the *Conditional Admission* is hereby made an order of this reviewing committee. The Respondent is reprimanded and is ordered to attend, in-person and at her own expense, two (2) continuing legal education courses. As set forth in the *Conditional Admission*, one course is to be in legal ethics and is to be completed within six (6) months of this decision, and the other is to be in the area of family law and is to be completed within nine (9) months of this decision. Each CLE course is to consist of a minimum of three (3) credit hours. The Respondent is to provide the Statewide Grievance Committee with written confirmation of her compliance with these conditions within thirty (30) days of completion of the CLE courses.


Reviewing committee member Dr. Paul Powers was not available for the March 9, 2006 hearing. The Chief Disciplinary Counsel and the Respondent waived the participation of Dr. Powers in the consideration and decision of the *Conditional Admission*. Accordingly, the matter was considered and decided by the undersigned.

So ordered.

cc: Attorney Steven Errante
(8)
(asc)

DECISION DATE: 4/13/06

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Attorney Geoffrey Naab

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Jorene M. Couture
Attorney Jorene Couture

Original
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STATEWIDE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

NO. 05-0121

**Hon. Holly Abery-Wetstone
Complainant**

Vs.

**Donna L. Wright
Respondent**

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION AND AGREEMENT AS TO DISCIPLINE

Pursuant to Practice Book § 2-82, the undersigned Respondent and Disciplinary Counsel stipulate and agree as follows:

1. This matter was instituted by grievance complaint filed by the Complainant Judge Holly Abery-Wetstone on February 14, 2005.
2. On September 25, 2005, the New Haven Grievance Panel found probable cause that the Respondent had violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3 in connection with her representation of a client in a divorce matter wherein an application for a family violence TRO resulted in the arrest of an innocent party.
3. Respondent admits certain facts in accordance with Practice Book Section 2-82, and has agreed with Disciplinary Counsel as to a form of discipline as more particularly detailed below.
4. Respondent has agreed that, within six months of the date of the approval of this agreement by a Reviewing Committee of the Statewide Grievance Committee, she will attend a course of continuing legal education in the area of professional ethics or professional responsibility.
5. Respondent has further agreed that within nine months of the approval of this agreement by a Reviewing Committee of the

Statewide Grievance Committee she will attend an advanced CLE seminar in family law issues, hopefully one that includes emphasis on the necessity of maintaining the appropriate boundaries between herself and her clients and her duties as a professional.

6. Respondent has further agreed that she will be reprimanded for her conduct in this matter.
7. A copy of the Conditional Admission and Affidavit has been sent to the Complainant. Complainant will be given an opportunity to advise the Committee of her position on the disposition of this matter.

WHEREFORE, this matter is submitted to the Statewide Grievance Committee for its approval in accordance with Practice Book § 2-82 (b).

Office of Disciplinary Counsel

Date

3/9/06

By Mark A. Dubois
Chief Disciplinary Counsel

Respondent Donna L. Wright

Date

3/9/06

Donna L. Wright

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF CONNECTICUT)

COUNTY OF) Ss: _____

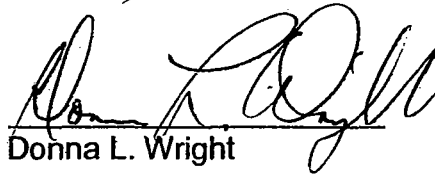
I am over the age of 18 and believe in the obligation of an oath.

Pursuant to Practice Book §2-82, I make the follow affidavit:

1. The Conditional Admission attached hereto and made a part hereof is voluntarily submitted.
2. I hereby consent to the form of discipline set forth in the attached Conditional Admission.
3. I am aware that I have a right to a full evidentiary hearing on this matter and I waive that right by entering into this agreement.
4. I have been neither subject to coercion nor duress and I am fully aware of the implications of this Affidavit and Conditional Admission. I have consulted with an attorney on this matter.
5. I am aware of the current proceeding regarding my alleged violation of Rules 1.1 and 1.3 with regard to my representation of William Wissner in his divorce case, with special reference to the events of May 13, 2004 when I and Mr. Wissner went to the West Haven police department to seek intervention concerning Mr. Wissner's wife and the safety of his child who was then with her.
6. On that day, when we arrived at the police station, I accompanied Mr. Wissner to meet with Officers Brian Bogert and Christy Connelli.

7. Mr. Wissner explained his concerns for the safety of his child, and we tried to have the officers intervene in the situation, with a wellness check or some other form of intervention.
8. During this meeting, when Officer Bogert asked about a TRO, Mr. Wissner produced an application for a family violence TRO which he had filed with the court in New Haven.
9. I did not examine the application. Mr. Wissner gave officer Bogert the application and hearing order. Officer Bogert assumed that the application had been granted.
10. I then told Officer Bogert that a TRO would supersede a then existing DCF voluntary agreement that I knew existed at the time which did not prohibit Mrs. Wissner from occupying 120 Robart Street.
11. Mrs. Wissner was arrested later on that evening based upon this series of events for occupying 120 Robart Street in violation of the TRO.
12. Later, I learned that the TRO had not been granted ex parte, and that all Mr. Wissner had in his possession and gave to Officer Bogert was an application for a TRO and a notice of hearing.
13. I recognize that an order of notice is not a TRO, and that Mrs. Wissner should not have been arrested based on this.
14. In retrospect, I feel that I may have become too involved with Mr. Wissner's matter. I was so concerned for him and his child that I may have failed to exercise the appropriate judgment necessary to satisfy my obligations as an attorney and a commissioner of the superior court to see that no fraud or injustice was done.
15. I should have made greater efforts to examine the document once Mr. Wissner produced it at the police station. I should have also made a more thorough inquiry into all relevant facts and circumstances before I accompanied Mr. Wissner to the police station.

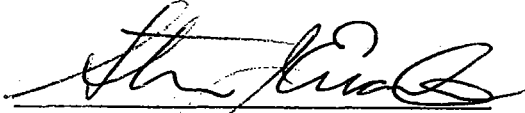
16. I admit that my conduct as complained of in this regard may be found to have violated Rules 1.1 and 1.3 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.
17. I am willing to attend two courses of continuing education in the area of professional responsibility or legal ethics and advanced family law and to be reprimanded for my conduct all as detailed in the Conditional Admission and Agreement as to Discipline filed this day with this affidavit.



Donna L. Wright

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 9th day of MARCH, 2005.



Commissioner of the Superior Court